

REMARKS

The office action of October 6, 2009, has been carefully considered.

It is noted that the disclosure is objected to for containing various informalities.

Claims 8-12 are objected to under 37 C.F.R. 1.75(c).

Claims 1-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

Claims 1, 5 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over GB 1 386 645 to Outokumpu Oy.

Claims 3-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Outokumpu Oy in view of the patent to MacRae et al.

Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Outokumpu Oy in view of the patent to MacRae et al., and further in view of the patent to Kuo.

Finally, it is noted that claim 2 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form and to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112.

In connection with the Examiner's objection to the disclosure, applicant has amended the specification to correct the informalities pointed out by the Examiner.

In view of these considerations it is respectfully submitted that the objection to the disclosure is overcome and should be withdrawn.

In view of the Examiner's rejections of the claims, applicant has canceled claims 2 and 9, amended claims 1, 3-8 and 10-12, and added new claims 13-16.

It is respectfully submitted that the claims now on file particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Applicant has amended the claims to address the instances of indefiniteness pointed out by the Examiner.

In view of these considerations it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 1-7 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph is overcome and should be withdrawn.

It is respectfully submitted that the claims presently on file differ essentially and in an unobvious, highly advantageous manner from the methods and constructions disclosed in the references.

Applicant has amended claim 1 to include the subject matter of allowable claim 2. Also, claim 5 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 2. With these changes to the independent claims it is submitted that the claims are now in condition for allowance.

In view of these considerations it is respectfully submitted that the rejections of claims 1 and 3-7 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) or 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are overcome and should be withdrawn.

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested.

Any additional fees or charges required at this time in



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connection with this application may be charged to Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 11-1835.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, PO Box 1450 Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on April 6, 2010.

By:

  
Klaus P. Stoffel

Date: April 6, 2010